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The Director of Central Intelligence
Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC No. 05915-84
13 September 1984

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: George Kolt
National Intelligence Officer for Europe

SUBJECT: French Foreign Minister Cheysson's Visit to Washington
(19-21 September) and Role in Central American
Politics

1. French Foreign Minister Cheysson will be participating in the European Community (EC)-Central American Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Costa Rica from 26 to 28 September. His prior visit to Washington (19-21 September) at the invitation of Secretary Shultz provides an opportunity to present him with current US views of the Central American situation. I suggest you discuss this issue with Secretary Shultz at your scheduled meeting on Friday, 19 September.

2. Although Cheysson may soon make way for Mitterrand's personal friend and confidant Roland Dumas at the Foreign Ministry, his views on Central America have been close to Mitterrand's and he remains a valuable French interlocutor on that particular issue. His well-known Third World activism is also likely to make him an influential participant in the EC-Central American meeting. The background to that meeting is as follows:

- It was proposed by Costa Rica's President Monge and readily accepted by EC members. Participants will be the Foreign Ministers of all ten EC countries plus Spain and Portugal; Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, Guatemala; and the four Contadora countries (Mexico, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela).



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- The French, along with most other participants in the meeting, would like to elevate the status of European-Latin American relations, but have few resources to offer and little influence on Nicaragua and its neighbors.
- There is widespread speculation, however, that Nicaragua and certain European Foreign Ministers might push for a political declaration that goes beyond supporting the Contadora process and criticizes US involvement in the region as well as Soviet and Cuban meddling.
- [redacted] Paris is uncertain how serious we are about the dialogue with the Nicaraguans and concerned about the possibility of a US military intervention in Central America after the US elections. 25X1
- There is little to suggest that Paris wants to become directly embroiled in Central American disputes, but it is willing to facilitate talks between Costa Rica and Nicaragua on demilitarizing their border. Paris also thinks a more active dialogue with Central American countries would strengthen moderates in the region.

3. US interests could be adversely affected by the San Jose meeting:

- A political declaration that supports bilateral negotiations between the US and Nicaragua would undercut the Administration's emphasis on a regional approach.
- Any resolution that implicitly places US involvement and Soviet and Cuban meddling on a par would not only equate US and Soviet actions but also implicitly question the unique US interests in the region.
- The Foreign Ministers' meeting could become a forum for pushing an aid program for all Central American countries, including Nicaragua; the French seem inclined to support this notion, as might some other EC countries.

4. In Washington, Cheysson will probably seek reassurance that the US is serious about talking with the Nicaraguans and that the US is not contemplating military intervention. Reassuring him on these points could keep him from supporting a political declaration at San Jose that is critical of US policies. Regarding the election we should discourage Cheysson from sending French observers unless the Sandinistas meet the conditions of the major democratic opposition coalition.

5. On the whole, Cheysson is unlikely to push for an independent French role on Central America, since Paris seems hesitant to get caught in the middle of a shooting war and has grown increasingly disillusioned with Sandinista policies. However, this still leaves considerable maneuvering room for the French to remain critical of the US. We should

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take advantage of the Secretary's meeting with Cheysson to ensure that Cheysson understands the US approach and the danger involved in undercutting US strategy. The Secretary is, of course, well aware of the issues involved and the attached suggested talking points are intended solely to provide a way for you to raise the subject with him.

6. This memorandum has been coordinated with Bob Vickers. He, A/NIO/Europe and DDI/EURA analyst participated in its preparation.

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George Kolt

Attachment:
Talking Points

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Attachment

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Proposed Talking Points
for DCI Meeting with Secretary Shultz
on 14 September 1984

- Your forthcoming meeting with French Foreign Minister Cheysson provides us a good opportunity to get across our point of view on Central America prior to Cheysson's participation in the EC Central American Foreign Ministers' Conference.
- I believe the major points to be made to Cheysson are:
 - The US is serious about dialogue with Nicaragua and supports the Contadora effort, but so far the Sandinistas seem to be more interested in maneuvering for position rather than striving for mutually acceptable solutions.
 - Our strategy is to keep on the pressure at the current level while holding forth the prospects of better relations if the Sandinistas cease undermining neighboring governments and allow a pluralistic society to develop in their own country.
 - The forthcoming elections will be a crucial indicator in regard to this latter objective. We support the presence of election observers only if the Sandinistas agree to the conditions of the main democratic opposition. However, Nicaragua is still taking a hard line while attempting to get enough international observers to give some legitimacy to the election.
 - We hope that the forthcoming EC-Central American Conference supports our strategy or at least does nothing to undermine it.

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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional) French Foreign Minister Cheysson's Visit to Washington (19-21 Sept)
and Role in Central American Politics

FROM: George Kolt
NIO for Europe

EXTENSION

NO. NIC No. 05915-84

DATE 13 September 1984

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

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